



July 2024 to June 2025

Operational Plan



Acknowledgement of Country

Cairns Regional Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the Traditional Custodians of our region, the Djabugay; Yirrganydji; Buluwai, Gimuy Walubara Yidinji; Mandingalbay Yidinji; Gunggandji; Dulabed and Malanbarra Yidinji; Bundabarra and Wadjanbarra Yidinji; Wanyurr Majay; Mamu and Ngadjon-Jii peoples.

Council also acknowledges all First Peoples, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples living in the Cairns Local Government Area and is committed to working closely with all First Peoples communities to advance reconciliation within our region.

Our Vision



SHAPING THE FUTURE

Our Values



TRUST

Honouring the trust of our residents, each other and staff



RESPONSIBILITY

Transparency and responsibility to our community



CAIRNS-NESS

Safeguarding what makes Cairns, Cairns

Our Focus

01

ROBUST ECONOMY

Supporting a diversified and resilient economy that backs business innovation, growth and jobs.



02

NATURAL ASSETS

Promoting, protecting and enhancing our iconic natural environment now and for generations to come.



03

DESIGN FOR LIVEABILITY

Creating a safe, sustainable and connected place that supports a quality life.



04

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Fostering a vibrant and healthy community where everyone feels they belong.



05

FOCUSED COUNCIL

Being a leader in local government.



About the Operational Plan

The Operational Plan is a major, annual planning document within Council's corporate performance, planning and reporting framework. It outlines the key activities and actions Council will undertake for the financial year in accordance with the adopted Annual Budget.

Together with the Corporate Plan and Annual Budget, it guides Council in delivering outcomes for the Cairns community.

The Local Government Act 2009, along with the Local Government Regulation 2012, requires Council to adopt an annual Operational Plan that shall:

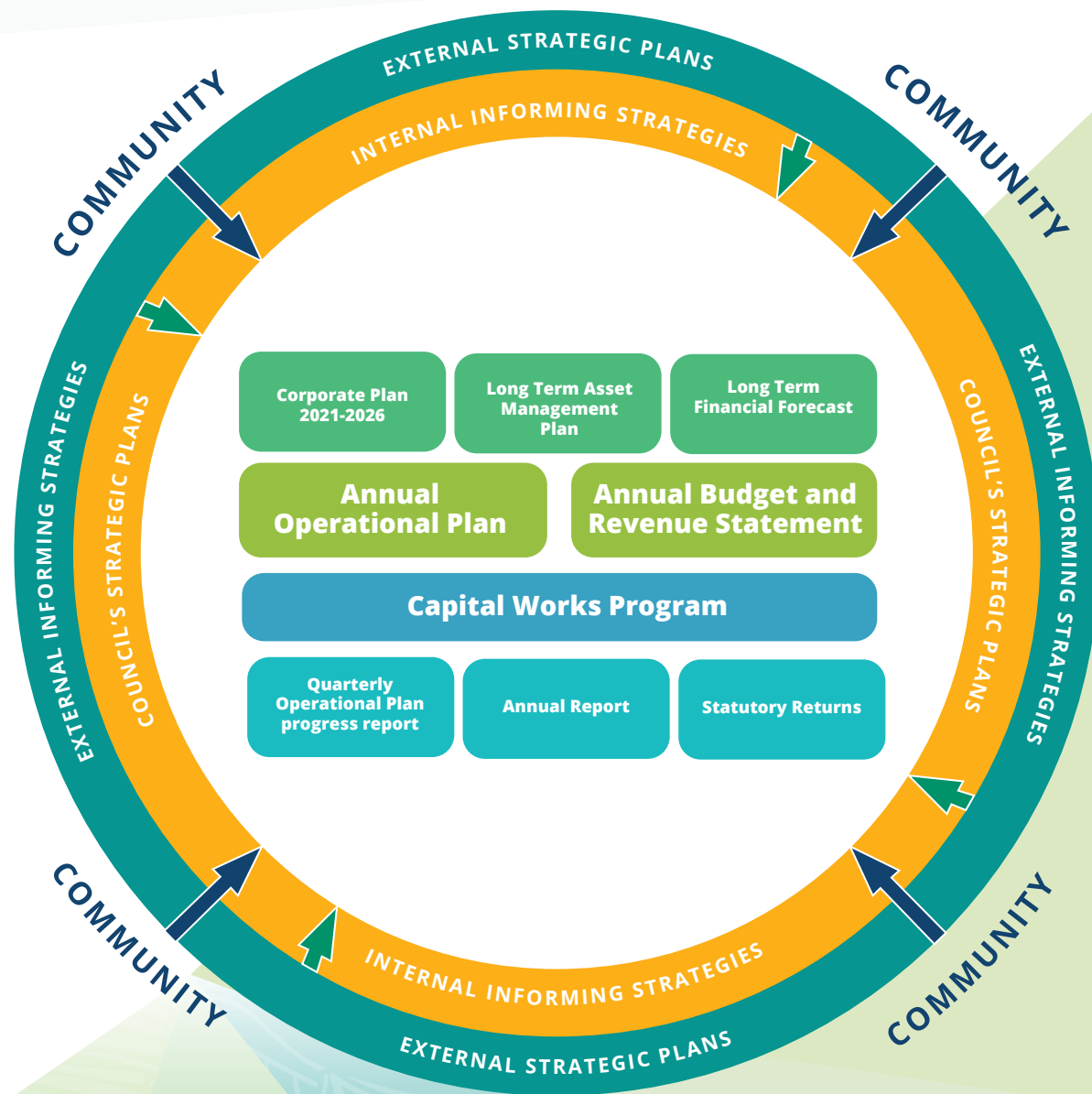
- Be consistent with Council's Annual Budget.
- State how Council will progress the implementation of the Corporate Plan.
- Manage operational risks.
- Include an annual performance plan for each commercial business unit of Council.

A report is tabled every quarter at Council Ordinary Meetings on the progress of the initiatives within the Operational Plan, with a full report produced at the end of each financial year.

HOW WE MANAGE OPERATIONAL RISKS

There are many risks, threats and opportunities that could potentially affect the achievement of objectives outlined in Council's strategic plans. Council currently has a number of risk management plans in place. Council's Risk Management Policy and the related Enterprise Risk Management Framework will ensure these plans are integrated in order to ensure an enterprise approach to risk management.

Strategic Planning Framework



Our Teams

COUNCIL'S SIX DIRECTORATES AND THEIR INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS, HEADED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO), WORK TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT ADOPTED COUNCIL POLICY AND DELIVER THE OPERATIONAL PLAN. EACH OF THESE HAVE DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

THE OFFICE OF THE CEO

The Office of the CEO provides executive and administrative support to the Mayor and Councillors, drives strategic direction-setting to ensure the successful operation of Council, and effectively manages all organisational and legislative responsibilities. The Office of CEO oversees the leading of the six Directors of the Executive Leadership Team.

1,362 TOTAL EMPLOYEES FOR COUNCIL

CAIRNS
INFRASTRUCTURE
AND ASSETS

FINANCE AND
BUSINESS SERVICES

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND
ADVOCACY

LIFESTYLE AND
COMMUNITY

PEOPLE AND
ORGANISATIONAL
PERFORMANCE

PLANNING, GROWTH
AND SUSTAINABILITY

CAIRNS INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS



76,270
WATER CONNECTIONS



1,396KM
ROADS MAINTAINED

This directorate is responsible for Council's built environment portfolio, managing all stages of the community infrastructure program from planning and design through to construction, maintenance, and upgrades. The portfolio covers transport, stormwater, water and wastewater, resource recovery, buildings, facilities, plant fleet and marine assets, which are managed by two sub-directorates with eight branches in each:

- Engineering Services
- Service Delivery

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



4.74M
BINS COLLECTED

1,356KM
SEWER MAINS

620
EMPLOYEES

2,305KM
WATER MAINS

\$224M
OPERATING EXPENSES

LIFESTYLE AND COMMUNITY



\$4.1M
GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS



3 MILLION
OPEN SPACES AND LEISURE FACILITIES ATTENDANCES

This directorate celebrates and strengthens our quality of life and community spirit by creating opportunities for residents and visitors to be active, informed and involved in the life of our region. It ensures our community resources such as our facilities, events, festivals and activities - are safe, accessible and inclusive. Services and programs are delivered by this directorate's three branches:

- Creative Life
- Community Life
- Community Spaces

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



395
EMPLOYEES



1.4 MILLION
MARKETS, LIBRARIES AND CULTURAL FACILITIES AND VENUES ATTENDANCES

\$5.3M
INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY SAFETY

\$98M
OPERATING EXPENSES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY



12
MAJOR EVENTS SUPPORTED



\$33.4M
ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM EVENTS SUPPORTED

This directorate works to deliver a prosperous environment for business and industry, enabling growth and wealth creation for our residents by creating a strong, diversified and growing economy through:

- diverse and secure employment opportunities
- a foundation for new and existing businesses to grow and succeed
- advocacy for priority issues
- the attraction and retention of investment
- support for major and economic events

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



SMART GREEN ECONOMY

PROMOTION OF THE CAIRNS AND FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND REGION AS A LEADER IN THE SMART GREEN ECONOMY

9

EMPLOYEES



\$7M

OPERATING EXPENSES



ADVOCACY

\$302.5M IN STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING COMMITMENTS FOR CAIRNS WATER SECURITY STRATEGY STAGE 1 THROUGH STRATEGIC ADVOCACY

PLANNING, GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY



515
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DECIDED



13,026
COMPLIANCE AND REGULATORY SERVICES REQUESTS

This directorate advances the organisation's contribution to better outcomes for people, places, environment and the economy. It does this by overseeing the planning and development process from end to end – long term strategic growth and environmental design, planning, assessment and regulation. The goal of the directorate is to protect and enhance our natural and built environment by planning, monitoring, applying and enforcing compliance with Local, State and Federal regulations and laws. This directorate's three branches have a focus on liveability, sustainability and prosperity:

- Growth and Sustainability
- Development and Planning
- Licensing and Compliance

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



1,291
FOOD PREMISES INSPECTIONS



488
LOTS CREATED

81

EMPLOYEES



\$13M

OPERATING EXPENSES

PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE



291
JOBS RECRUITED



89,991
OVERALL CUSTOMER REQUESTS (CRMS)

This directorate ensures the workforce is engaged to deliver Council's vision of 'Shaping the future'. It achieves this by recognising and building a contemporary workplace that prioritises the wellbeing, health and safety of our skilled and dedicated staff who are passionate about the community it serves. It comprises three branches:

- Organisational Performance
- Wellbeing, Health and Safety
- Marketing and Communications

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



87,523
CUSTOMER SERVICE INBOUND CALLS

46
APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES EMPLOYED

92
EMPLOYEES



780
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION COMPLAINTS RESOLVED

\$20M
OPERATING EXPENSES

FINANCE AND BUSINESS SERVICES



3,332
ACTIVE SUPPLIERS



87%
OF PROCUREMENT WITHIN THE LOCAL AREA

This directorate works across all areas of Council to ensure the effective procurement, financial sustainability and technological capability of our operations. Its four branches provide essential internal services that support the organisation to deliver services to the community:

- Finance
- Information Services
- Procurement and Payables
- Revenue and Business Support

HOW THEY SERVICE THE COMMUNITY EVERY YEAR



158
EMPLOYEES

21.86TB
COMMUNITY WI-FI DATA PROVIDED



\$29M
OPERATING EXPENSES

200,860
COMMUNITY WI-FI LOGINS

Our Role

CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL HAS MULTIPLE ROLES IN DELIVERING THE OPERATIONAL PLAN. THESE ARE:



ADVOCATE

Promoting the interests of the community to other decision makers and influencers.



FACILITATOR

Assisting others to be involved in activities by bringing groups and interested parties together.



FUNDER

Funding other organisations to deliver services.



PARTNER

Forming partnerships and strategic alliances with other parties in the interests of the community.



PROVIDER

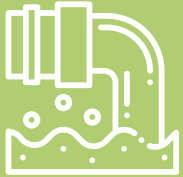
Delivering services.



REGULATOR

Regulating activities through local law or policy.

Major Projects and Initiatives



\$3M
PROMOTING
ACTIVE TRAVEL
VIA **NEW**
FOOTPATHS
(TRIPLING SPENDING)



\$600K
UPGRADE AND
RENEW
EXISTING
FOOTPATHS

\$1.4M
PYRAMID PARK-
LANDS GUJURA
(EX KENRICK ST PARK)
REDEVELOPMENT

\$730K
REFRESH OF
MUDDY'S
PLAYGROUND



\$7M
CONTINUE
ROLLOUT OF
SMART WATER
METERS

\$217M
PROGRESS THE
CAIRNS WATER
SECURITY
PROJECT

\$5.2M
SEALING &
RESEALING
ROADS, KERBS,
CHANNELS AND
SHOULDERS

\$355K
BUS STOP
IMPROVEMENTS

\$4M
JOHNSON RD,
WHITEROCK
UPGRADE

\$1.8M
TRINITY
BEACH
COMMUNITY
ACTIVITY SPACE

\$725K
CEMETERY
IMPROVEMENTS
AND UPGRADES



\$4.6M
DRAIN AND
FLOOD
MITIGATION
WORKS

\$925K
SUGARWORLD
SLIDES AND
PARKLANDS
UPGRADES AND
IMPROVEMENTS

\$500K
UPGRADES AT
TOUCH PARK IN
AEROGLEN

\$1.6M
SUPPORT AND DEVELOP
MAJOR
SPORTING &
ENTERTAINMENT
EVENTS



\$750K
REFRESH &
UPGRADE
SMITHFIELD
LIBRARY



\$1.3M
COMMUNITY
GRANTS

\$5.3M
CITY SAFE
INCREASED
SECURITY
PATROLS AND
UPGRADES TO
CCTV NETWORK



\$11.7M
CONTINUE
CONSTRUCTION
MT PETER
WATER
RESERVOIR

\$577K
REDLYNCH &
ESPLANADE
SKATE PARK
REDEVELOPMENT

OUR
CAIRNS
SURVEY



FOCUS ONE



ROBUST ECONOMY

Supporting a diversified and resilient economy that backs business innovation, growth and jobs.

ACTION	SUCCESS MEASURE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
<p>1 Review the portfolio of economic development related Resource and Performance Agreements expiring on 30 June 2025 and consider/implement future funding arrangements if/as appropriate.</p>	<p>Review completed</p>	<p>Economic Development and Advocacy</p>	
<p>2 Update Cairns & Great Barrier Reef Events Strategy 2025 in consultation with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ).</p>	<p>Strategy endorsed by Council</p>	<p>Economic Development and Advocacy</p>	
<p>3 Work collaboratively with Tourism and Events Queensland to continue to implement/further develop an alliance approach to event funding, attraction and retention.</p>	<p>Increased value of economic benefits from tourism and events</p>	<p>Economic Development and Advocacy</p>	
<p>4 Implement advocacy strategy aimed at securing matched Federal investment of \$195m (Queensland Government has already committed \$195m) towards the capital cost of Council's Cairns Water Security Stage 1 Project (CWSS1).</p>	<p>Strategy implemented</p>	<p>Economic Development and Advocacy</p>	
<p>5 Identify additional (in addition to CWSS1) advocacy priorities for upcoming State and Federal elections and develop and implement advocacy strategies for these priorities.</p>	<p>Additional priorities identified and strategy development commenced</p>	<p>Economic Development and Advocacy</p>	
<p>6 Further investigate the feasibility of improved trail networks at the Smithfield Mountain Bike Park.</p>	<p>Feasibility study completed</p>	<p>Lifestyle and Community</p>	

ROLE KEY



ADVOCATE



FACILITATOR



FUNDER



PARTNER



PROVIDER



REGULATOR

FOCUS TWO



NATURAL ASSETS

Promoting, protecting and enhancing our iconic natural environment now and for generations to come.

ACTION	SUCCESS MEASURE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
<p>7 Progress through full detailed design and commence construction phase for Cairns Water Security Strategy Stage 1.</p>	<p>Construction commenced</p>	<p>Cairns Infrastructure and Assets</p>	
<p>8 Develop Water Demand Management Strategy 2026-2035.</p>	<p>Strategy developed</p>	<p>Cairns Infrastructure and Assets</p>	
<p>9 Completion of business case for next step investment for Resource Recovery 2040.</p>	<p>Business case completed</p>	<p>Cairns Infrastructure and Assets</p>	
<p>10 Development of Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan to meet Net Zero Emissions.</p>	<p>Plan completed</p>	<p>Planning, Growth and Sustainability</p>	

FOCUS THREE



DESIGN FOR LIVEABILITY

Creating a safe, sustainable and connected place that supports a quality life.

ACTION	SUCCESS MEASURE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
11 Continue to progress Towards 2050 Growth Strategy: Develop Draft Growth Strategy in consultation with the community.	Draft strategy commenced	Planning, Growth and Sustainability	
12 Develop Planning Scheme Scoping Study post the Towards 2050 Growth Strategy.	Scoping study commenced	Planning, Growth and Sustainability	
13 Develop an action plan for landscaping and gardens service levels in public spaces.	Plan completed	Lifestyle and Community	
14 Establish natural asset service levels and deliverables for pest animal operations, revegetation and weed management.	Service levels and deliverables defined	Lifestyle and Community	

ROLE KEY



ADVOCATE



FACILITATOR



FUNDER



PARTNER



PROVIDER



REGULATOR

FOCUS FOUR



COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Fostering a vibrant and healthy community where everyone feels they belong.

ACTION	SUCCESS MEASURE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
15 Develop a Cairns Libraries Strategic Plan.	Plan developed	Lifestyle and Community	
16 Develop an Aquatic Strategy to guide the provision and management of aquatic opportunities and natural areas.	Strategy completed	Lifestyle and Community	
17 Develop the Major Events Precinct Master Plan. (subject to successful funding application)	Plan developed	Lifestyle and Community	 
18 Develop an action plan to position Cairns as the preeminent destination for women's sport.	Plan developed	Lifestyle and Community	  

ROLE KEY



ADVOCATE



FACILITATOR



FUNDER



PARTNER



PROVIDER



REGULATOR



FOCUSED COUNCIL

Being a leader in local government.

ACTION	SUCCESS MEASURE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
19 Provide oversight/coordination of the Recovery Action Plan for TC Jasper.	Action Plan completed	Office of the CEO	
20 Progress implementation of the Asset Management Improvement Plan.	Actions delivered	Cairns Infrastructure and Assets	
21 Progress implementation of the Cyber Security Resiliency Program (CSRP).	Milestone 1 delivered	Finance and Business Services	
22 Development of a Digital Strategy.	Strategy developed	Finance and Business Services	
23 Conduct Our Cairns 2024 Community Survey.	Survey completed	People and Organisational Performance	
24 Develop CX (Customer Experience) Strategy.	Strategy developed	People and Organisational Performance	
25 Commencement of the Development and Planning Strategic Blueprint to benchmark and review services provided.	Blueprint developed	Planning, Growth and Sustainability	
26 Development of the Licensing and Compliance Framework.	Framework developed	Planning, Growth and Sustainability	
27 Strategic Review of workers compensation claims 2020 - 2024 to identify key opportunities to reduce lost time injury duration rates.	Review completed	People and Organisational Performance	

ROLE KEY



ADVOCATE



FACILITATOR



FUNDER



PARTNER



PROVIDER



REGULATOR



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